Proposal for downsizing the I and B Ministry

72. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for downsizing his Ministry;

(b) if so, what are the main proposals;

(c) whether it would lead to reorganization in the Ministry; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) to (d) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has not taken any decision on downsizing the staff in the Ministry or in media units. The Fifth Pay Commission had recommended reduction in the overall size of the bureaucracy. The Ministry of Finance has appointed an Expenditure Reforms Commission in February, 2000 in pursuance of the Budget speech of the Finance Minister wherein he had observed that high rate of growth of non-developmental expenditure by Government is a growing and critical source of concern. The Finance Minister had further observed that the most effective and lasting solution to this problem is to begin the process of downsizing the Government. The Expenditure Reforms Commission has not yet submitted its report in regard to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Supply of radio sets under Community Listening Scheme

73. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the supply of receiving radio sets by Government under the Community Listening Scheme during each of the last three years, State-wise / UT-wise; and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to preserve and maintain the relevance and importance of radio in the present T.V. era?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Community Listening Scheme is operational only in the State of J and K at present. The details of supply of receiving sets supplied during the last three years is as under:

Year	No. of receiving sets supplied
1997-98	39
1998-99	30
1999-2000	—

(b) It has been the constant endeavour of the Govt. to provide quality Radio service throughout the length and breadth of the country. Because of its unique features of low cost, convenience of use at any location, mobility etc. Radio occupies a distinct and important place in the media. In order to provide variety and new services through this medium, Government has recently decided to issue licenses to Private Indian Companies to operate FM Radio Stations in the country.

Launching of package for North-East States

74. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has launched a North-East package of his department at Guwahati;

(b) if so, the detailed package to be implemented in the North-East States, State-wise;

(c) by when the transmitter power of AIR, Imphal will be up-graded from 1 KW to 10 KW: and

(d) the measures taken to extend the information at village level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) A proposal to strengthen AIR and Doordarshan coverage in North Eastern States and to improve the quality and reach of the programmes in this region is under consideration of the Government.

(c) A new 10 KW FM Tr. at AIR Imphal is targeted to be completed during 2000-2001.

(d) It has been the constant endeavour of the Government extend the information through Radio and TV coverage to the rural areas of the country in general and North-East in particular.